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OFFICIAL INFORMATION RESPECTING THE PROGRESS OF REFORM IN THE SLAVE COLONIES OF GREAT BRITAIN DURING THE PAST YEAR. 1. *Jamaica*; 2. *Nevis*; 3. *Barbadoes*; 4. *Antigua*; 5. *St. Vincent*; 6. *Trinidad*; 7. *Demerara*; 8. *Berbice*; 9. *St. Lucia*; 10. *Bermuda*; 11. *Cape of Good Hope*; 12. *Mauritius*. Conclusion.

WE are greatly in arrear with our readers. We have now before us a large and accumulating mass of official information, which strikingly illustrates the untractable nature of colonial slavery, but which the pressure of other matters, not admitting of delay, has hitherto prevented us from analyzing with due care. The first of these documents which we shall notice *was presented to Parliament by His Majesty's command*, on the 10th of March last, and is numbered 230. It consists of the usual annual exposition of the measures pursued by His Majesty's Government for ameliorating the condition of the slave population in the British colonies, being a continuation of a similar paper presented in 1830, and of which we inserted an abstract in the *Anti-Slavery Reporter*, No. 73. We propose to give a like abstract of the paper now before us.

1. *Jamaica*.

The communications from this island, for the year, are almost entirely confined to a case of grievous oppression, brought to the knowledge of Viscount Goderich by Mr. Wildman, a proprietor of several plantations, and the unquestioned facts of which, as we collect them from this official document, are to the following effect.

Eleanor James, an elderly female slave, belonging to one of Mr. Wildman's estates, called Low Ground, in the parish of Clarendon, had sold a pig to a Mr. Macdonald, the owner of a neighbouring plantation, called North Hall. The payment having been unduly delayed, Eleanor James went, on the evening of the 28th November, 1829, to North Hall, accompanied by a fellow slave, named Joanna Williams, and applied to Mr. Macdonald for the money owing to her. Mr. Macdonald, instead of complying with this reasonable demand, instantly ordered her to be taken a short distance from his dwelling house, and there, he himself superintending the process, to be laid down prone on the earth and flogged. She was flogged by two drivers in succession; first with a whip, and then with a switch; and being then raised from her prostrate position, her wounds were washed with salt pickle. One witness counted 200 stripes, as having been inflicted upon her before the pickle

was applied; the lash of the whip with which she was flogged having been previously dipped in water to add to its efficiency. Mrs. Macdonald, the wife of Mr. M., and a young lady, the sister of Mrs. Macdonald, and a white young man, a Mr. Mackae, were in the house at the time the order to flog Eleanor James was given by Mr. Macdonald, with whom the young lady interceded for her in vain. The first driver whom Mr. Macdonald employed not flogging her to his satisfaction, he called another, named Edward, to execute his sentence. While Eleanor James was undergoing this merciless infliction, she asked for water; Mr. Macdonald said, with an oath, that "no water should be given to her; he did not care if she died on the spot." She was then sent to the negro houses of North Hall; and next morning Mr. Macdonald sent her two dollars, (probably meant as the payment of his debt,) and ordered her off the property. She immediately went home to Low Ground, and there told her tale, and exhibited her lacerated person.

The severe illness, both of Mr. Taylor, the attorney of Mr. Wildman, (then in England,) and of the overseer of Low Ground, prevented them for some time from proceeding to take the necessary steps for the legal investigation of this atrocity. A neighbouring magistrate, however, Mr. John Macleod, was requested to interfere; and Eleanor James waited upon him, along with Mr. Bellow, the book-keeper of Low Ground, and stated her complaint; but this magistrate declined all interference, and recommended that an application should be made to Mr. Townsend, the clerk of the peace for Clarendon, who resided at a distance of thirty miles from Low Ground. On the parties arriving, however, at Mr. Townsend's, he was found incapable of acting, being confined to bed by a serious accident.

As soon as Mr. Taylor, who resided near Kingston, had recovered from his illness, he repaired to Clarendon, and applied to Mr. French, the custos of the parish, to summon a council of protection to investigate the outrage. The council of protection met, and did nothing. Two more councils of protection were subsequently summoned, with the same result. At length, a fourth council of protection, which was formed on the 19th of April, 1830, having examined the case, came to the conclusion, "That the subject matter of this complaint is not properly cognizable by the council of protection; but that the owner of the slave Eleanor James has his remedy against the person or persons inflicting the punishment, if a slave or slaves, by indictment in the slave court; if by a free person or persons, by indictment in the quarter sessions, or grand court."

Mr. Taylor, finding himself thus baffled in his efforts to procure redress, laid the whole matter before Earl Belmore, the governor. By him it was referred to the attorney general, Mr. James, whose opinion was pronounced upon it to the following effect:—that having perused the affidavits, &c. relative to the complaint of Eleanor James, he must express his inability to comprehend the principle on which the resolution of the council of protection was framed; that the owner's right of appeal to other tribunals for redress ought not to have suspended the functions of that council, whose bounden duty it was (looking at the law of the island) to have investigated the complaint, and, if there were grounds for pro-

secution, to have submitted the same to the proper judicature; for if the owner's right to bring the complaint before other tribunals were to withdraw it from the cognizance of the council of protection, no case could exist in which its power of investigation might not be arrested, and be rendered a mere nominal institution, without the slightest benefit to the slaves, for whose protection it was specially intended.—He added, that he was not aware that the governor could now aid Mr. Taylor, except by expressing his disapprobation of the conduct of the council of protection for their culpable neglect in not bringing to trial a party implicated in conduct so inhuman and barbarous; and that Mr. Macleod was still more amenable to the governor's censure, for referring the slave to the clerk of the peace, at a distance of thirty miles, instead of acting promptly on the complaint, and summoning before him, as a magistrate, witnesses who were then on the spot, (but who had since, it seems, either died or left the island,) and binding them over in recognizances for the ensuing court.

"Thus," observes Mr. Taylor, "every effort was abortive, and thus it has been proved that an attorney for an absent proprietor may, for months, persevere in his attempts to obtain redress for an act of oppression committed on a slave under his charge, but unavailingly. The strong impression made on my mind," he adds, "by the conduct of the Clarendon magistracy, coupled with similar proceedings of other parochial authorities, is, that councils of protection are a mockery, and that, so long as slave evidence is rejected by the law, the slave has scarcely the shadow of protection from ill treatment."

We need not point out how opportunely these observations of Mr. Taylor, as well as the whole details of this atrocious case of Eleanor James, serve to falsify the statements of the West India Manifesto, especially under the head of "legal protection," which we have so fully examined in our last number (p. 313.)

Lord Goderich having placed all these circumstances fully before the governor, Earl Belmore, thus concludes his despatch:—"I have now to desire that your Lordship will inform me whether, in conformity with the advice of the attorney general, you conveyed the expression of your displeasure at their conduct to Mr. Macleod, or to Messrs. French, Dunn, Macwilliam, Macnaught, Turner, Macartney, Fraser, and Coleman, the magistrates who were present at the council of protection on the 19th April, 1830, and to the six vestrymen, or to such of them as concurred in the resolution of that council. If your Lordship adopted the advice of the attorney general, I am to request that you will transmit to me a copy of the communication made to them. If you did not adopt his advice, you will be pleased to report to me your reasons for rejecting it."—The gentlemen whose names are here given were still in the magistracy of Jamaica at the close of 1830.

2. *Nevis.*

Many of our readers will probably recollect the atrocities perpetrated in this little island about twenty or twenty-one years ago by a person of the name of Huggins, which excited at the time the universal though

bootless indignation of Parliament and the country.* The papers laid on the table of the House of Commons in 1831 that are now before us, have brought to light a parallel even to these almost obsolete atrocities, which is of a much more recent date, and which adds another pregnant proof, to the many already produced, not only of the unmitigated lot of the colonial bondsman, but of the incurable viciousness and the deep criminality of the whole system of our colonial slavery.

It appears by a variety of official details, transmitted to the Secretary of State by the Governor of the Colony, that on a sugar plantation called Stapleton's, belonging to Lord Combermere, which had been entrusted by him to the management of a person of the name of Walley, a dreadful mortality was discovered to have taken place among the slaves belonging to it. Their number, in about three or four years, namely, between 1826 and January 1830, had decreased from 249 to 190, being a decrease of 59, or from 22 to 24 per cent. in that time; or about seven or eight per cent. per annum. And this frightful mortality appears to have been caused not by any epidemic disease, nor by such acts of violence as put a speedy term to the sufferings of its victims, but by a gradual process of exhaustion; by the excessive exaction of daily labour; by the parsimonious abridgment of daily food; by a system of lingering torture, which extinguishes human life as it were by inches; and leaves the unhappy sufferers no refuge from their misery but the grave.

In January 1830, a board of magistrates was appointed to investigate the conduct of Mr. Walley, which appears to have continued its sittings for three or four weeks. This board consisted of Messrs. W. Pemberton, G. Bucke, Lockhart Gordon, Charles Pinney, Peter Huggins, and J. Ede. The following are some of the facts elicited by their inquiry:—

One witness, William Huggins, who had been an overseer for seven months under Mr. Walley, stated on oath, that the gang on Stapleton's estate turned out as soon in the morning as they could see to work, and left off work in the field at sunset, to go to collect grass for the cattle. Each negro was obliged to bring a load of grass at noon, and another at night. A quarter of an hour or twenty minutes, he said, was the time allowed at breakfast; two hours were allowed at noon.† Sometimes, when the work was urgent, they had not breakfast-time and noon-time on the same day. The gang worked at breakfast and noon-time both in and out of crop occasionally, but not very often; the negroes complained of this. They worked very hard while he was on the estate, and some of them he thought beyond their strength; those who were the most able kept up their rows; the others were pushed to keep up with *them*. He added, however, that he thought they had sufficient time; at least they had the same time that was allowed on other estates. He had seen some of

* A full account of these atrocities is preserved in the Fifth Report of the African Institution, and may also be found in the Records of the House of Commons for 1811, (No. 204).

† The time required for grass collecting at noon was taken, we presume, from these two hours, thus shortening the noon-tide interval.

the gang exhausted from fatigue. Sometimes in the morning almost half the gang went up to Mr. Walley, complaining that they were sick, and Mr. Walley selected and sent back to the field those whom he thought able to work. The driver was unnecessarily severe: he would sometimes give the slaves from three to a dozen stripes. Mr. Walley would sometimes find fault with the driver for not having had a sufficient quantity of work done, when he (the driver) would push the negroes. There were nine deaths on the estate while he lived there, which he conceived to be a great number: the people who died were generally much swollen. Many of them, young and old, ate dirt. The slaves were generally addicted to this practice. He did not think that the stocks at Stapleton's were more severe than other stocks, though he thought the holes were rather smaller, and the negroes complained that they cut their legs. He had never known negroes worked so hard any where else, or yet so well fed. He did not mean to say that Mr. Walley was the cause of the death of any of the negroes.—The witness seemed to wish in parts of his evidence to extenuate Mr. Walley's conduct, denying that he punished the slaves severely, and affirming that the negroes were well fed. Such an assertion, however, was obviously at variance with the fact of the general prevalence among them of dirt-eating, a vice issuing in the fatal disease called *mal d'estomac*, and which is well known to be caused by low and scanty diet.

The general statements of Mr. Huggins were confirmed by the medical persons who attended the estate, and who added some further particulars of ill treatment and neglect. The sick, it was said, were not attended to as they ought to have been; they often complained of it. The sick were not allowed to remain in the sick house till perfectly cured, and, contrary to medical orders, were repeatedly sent out to work before they were so; and in consequence they were apt to return to the sickhouse in a worse state than before. In particular instances, where animal food was ordered, the order was not attended to. Miscarriages were also frequent: these might have been prevented had the women been kept quiet; but this was not done. Deaths generally proceeded from dirt-eating, or *mal d'estomac*, and this disease seemed to arise from debility, caused by hard labour, (Mr. Walley being anxious to put in large crops,) exposure to cold, want of nourishment, and indigestible or ill-dressed food. One medical gentleman testified that he had known the negroes to have been at one time for six weeks without provisions, except what they themselves could procure.—[Nevis is one of the foreign-fed colonies.] And yet these very medical men spoke of the goodness of the allowances given to the slaves by Mr. Walley, and of his supplying them, when ill, with meat and wine; adding that the negroes never complained to them of severe punishment, or of want of food, or of any harsh or harassing treatment; and an overseer of the name of Souch, who lived three years under Mr. Walley, even eulogized his mode of treatment. He said Mr. Walley flogged the slaves only as other people usually flogged them. He did not think that the negroes on this estate were over-worked; they did not work harder than other negroes. Mr. W., he said, had even increased their allowance from six pints a week to eight.—But even eight pints a week, be it re-

membered, is but a starving allowance for a working or indeed for any slave.

We confess that these extenuating and apologetical opinions, indicating as they do what is the prevalent feeling on the subject of negro treatment, when they are looked at in connexion with the unquestioned facts of this case, produce on our minds a stronger impression of the wretchedness of the slave, than even the most cruel inflictions to which he is subjected. They seem to prove that the hearts not merely of individuals, but of the white community at large, are steeled against sympathy with the negro, who is regarded, and even spoken of by them, not as a fellow being, but as a brute.

Hitherto we have confined ourselves to the evidence of the *general* treatment by Mr. Walley of Lord Combermere's slaves, as given on oath by witnesses who were white. Besides these, several slaves were examined, whose testimony went more into detail. They stated that the dirt-eaters had broad wooden collars placed round their necks. [We presume, to prevent their hands from reaching their mouths.] One of them, William Noble, had one of these collars fastened round his neck; he was heard to cry out with the pain produced by its tightness. The collar was at last taken off, but in three hours he died.—One witness stated that a woman slave, named Frances, was placed in the stocks three days and three nights. The first day both legs were in the stocks; she cried all day. Mr. Walley at night ordered the witness to release one leg, but she was never out of the stocks during the three days and nights. Frances said she was sick, and had fever, and could not work: Mr. Walley ordered her into the stocks: she looked sick. After three days she consented to go to work, and did not come to the sick house again for a week.—When witness put this woman's leg into the stocks, the hole proved too small: in about an hour she cried that her leg was cut. Mr. Walley could hear her cry, for he was at hand; but he gave no orders about her till night, when by his desire one leg was taken out; then the witness saw that it was cut. Frances was stated to be a very sickly negro, having a flux of blood. She also died.

We shall give the details of only one other case as deposed to by five or six slaves.—Eneas was fireman on Stapleton's estate. Mr. Walley flogged him four times in one day, with his own hands. He flogged him because the fire in the boiling house was not good. He flogged him on his bare back. The number of stripes in the first three floggings is not deposed to; the fourth flogging in that one day consisted of fifty stripes. After receiving them he was sent back to make fire, and when done was afterwards locked up. Next week he again made fire, but complained of pain. Mr. Walley found fault with the fire he made, and told the overseer to flog him whenever the fire was bad. The overseer did so. He had the fever upon him on the Saturday when the overseer flogged him. On the Tuesday after, he went to Mr. Walley complaining he had fever; but the driver, in Mr. Walley's presence, flogged him out of the yard. He was locked up in the stocks and died on Saturday night.

On a view of the result of this investigation by the board of magistrates, six indictments were preferred against Mr. Walley by the law

officers of the Crown, one for murder, two for manslaughter, and three for maltreatment. But they were either ignored by the grand jury, or failed from the nonadmissibility of slave evidence.

The whole of these proceedings were communicated by the Secretary of State to Lord Combermere. His Lordship professed to feel deep horror of the inhuman and abominable conduct of his manager, Mr. Walley. He has not, however, explained to Lord Goderich, how he came to place, in that man's hands, the uncontrolled power over his slaves with which he appears to have been invested. Lord Combermere says he had friends on the spot (namely, Governor Maxwell, and Mr. Swindall) who knew how anxious he was to promote the welfare and happiness of his negroes. Did he give them authority to interfere? Or was he not aware of the liability of his slaves to suffer from oppression? Mr. Walley's atrocities had been proceeding, for several years, unchecked by any one. Nay, we find that so long ago as the 1st of May, 1827, this very Mr. Walley, then the manager of Stapleton's, was actually indicted for the murder of a slave, named Davis, belonging to that estate; and that the indictment was then, as now, thrown out by the grand jury. Now it does seem strange that Lord Combermere should have been unapprized of this transaction; or, being apprized of it, that he should have suffered Mr. Walley to remain in charge of his slaves for about three years longer, until he had killed off nearly a fourth of them. His conduct, in 1827, appears to us to have been quite as abominable and inhuman as in subsequent years. We have before us the evidence taken upon it, on the 9th of April, 1827, by two magistrates, Mr. Claxton, and Mr. Gordon, and though the indictment founded upon that evidence was ignored, it is *prima facie* no less decisive of Walley's guilt, than the evidence taken three years later by another bench of magistrates, and of which Lord Combermere has expressed himself with so much just indignation. The evidence of 1827 is to the following effect :—

Richard Anderson, overseer on the estate says, that on Tuesday the 23d March, Davis was sent to the estate as a runaway, by Mr. Marr. He appeared very weak. Gave him victuals, and put him to pull the fuel to the copper holes on that evening. He was sent, the same evening, to the sick house, where he remained till the Tuesday following, when he was brought to the boiling house to pot sugar. Tuesday evening he was sent back to the sick house; he had refused to work; said he was not able. Next day, Wednesday, he was sent to the field. On Wednesday evening he died.

The evidence of Anderson was confirmed by Clement Souch, another overseer on the estate.

Robert Washington, the Coroner, heard that a negro had died suddenly on Stapleton's. Went to hold an inquisition on the Saturday after; found the man buried; had the body dug up; returned a verdict, 'Died by the visitation of God;' examined witnesses by whom it was proved that Davis died on his way from the field, being unable to walk farther. No medical man saw him till he was dead. There were no marks of violence.

Alexander, a slave belonging to the estate, was told, on Wednesday

at sunset, to carry Davis to the sick house. Davis had been in the field all day; and had been the day before at the works. He complained all day; could not work, could not eat. The driver put another negro in the row with him; *gave him a few licks in the morning, and at noon four more to force him to work.* Took him to the Mountain estate; he could not walk; was obliged to lead him; helped him as far as the upper windmill where he died. Witness went for help; when he came back, Davis was dead; there was no one with him when he died. The day he was sent home he was put to make fire; and the day after sent to assist at the works; he was unable to do any thing. Sunday he was in the sick house, Monday and Tuesday about the works, the last day (Wednesday) in the field; was locked up every night in the sick house; was buried on Friday, and dug up again on Saturday."

Two physicians testified that there were no marks of violence on Davis, but that he was much emaciated.

Thomas Marr sent Davis home to Mr. Walley; thought him in a very weak and low state: did not consider him capable of working, only fit for the sick house.

Such was the evidence against Walley in 1827.

Various other cases of cruelty, occurring in Nevis, were recently brought forward for trial; but they met with the same fate as those of Mr. Walley from the Nevis Grand Jury. But we cannot give the details, and must be content with the light thrown on them by Lord Goderich, who thus comments upon them in a despatch to Governor Maxwell, of the 4th December, 1830.

"Your despatches of 7th July have been received, and I have perused the evidence they contain of systematic cruelty and oppression with feelings which I will not trust myself to express. Entirely participating in the indignation with which you regard the atrocities perpetrated by Mr. Walley, I no less fully concur with you in regretting that all attempts to obtain justice should have been defeated by defects in the recent slave code of Nevis, and by the inefficient administration of the law in that island. The failure of four of the prosecutions against Walley is attributed to the act for the admission of slave evidence of October, 1728." "The inconvenience of such an enactment, and its inconsistency with sound principles of legislation, did not escape the notice of Sir G. Murray when that act was under his consideration." (See his despatch of 10th September, 1829.) "I regret to find that the practical mischief resulting from it has been experienced much sooner and more extensively than had been anticipated."

"The rejection, by the grand jury of Nevis, of the bills of indictment preferred in so many cases of alleged cruelty perpetrated against slaves on different plantations, when viewed in reference to the previous depositions, has unavoidably produced on my mind the painful conviction that the gentlemen of the colony have not correctly understood their duties as grand jurors. I cannot permit myself to believe that persons in their station of life could be insensible to the sacred obligations of the oath they had taken; and though I am not disposed to attribute to them such prejudices as would prevent the dispassionate exercise of

their judgment in questions of such serious moment, I cannot but feel that the course they have pursued in this matter is calculated to produce a very painful and unsatisfactory impression in this country."

"You will consult with the law officers of the Crown how far it may be possible to file criminal informations in those cases where bills of indictment against Walley and others have been rejected by the grand jury. I would particularly direct your attention to the cases of Davis and Harriot Simpson; and of George Tobin and Monmouth, punished by Mr. Cousins. In the last of these cases the grand jury, not content with throwing out the bill, thought proper to find, on their oaths, that it was 'frivolous and vexatious.' I apprehend that this finding was entirely beyond their province, and the previous examinations would almost irresistibly lead to the conclusion that the bill was improperly rejected."

"I perceive that on the investigation in Walley's case, a large majority of the magistrates present deliberately quitted the bench, and abandoned the inquiry with which they had been charged. On an occasion of so much importance, some very serious cause ought to have existed to justify such a secession, and you will have the goodness to ascertain and report what that cause may have been."

Lord Goderich concludes with expressing his earnest hope that the gentlemen of Nevis may derive from these proceedings, a lively impression of the absolute necessity of affording more ample protection to the slave population, and of providing more effective means for the punishment of offences against them.

It seems scarcely possible that his Lordship or any rational man, who knows the facts of the case, can now cherish such a hope. Nay, can a single doubt be entertained that it has at length become the proper and exclusive, the clear and incumbent duty of Government and Parliament no longer to commit this work to planters, but to perform it themselves?

3. *Barbadoes.*

All we have from this colony is the *draft* of a bill on slave evidence, proposed and agreed to by the Council, but not yet adopted by the Assembly.

4. *Antigua.*

The Governor of Antigua has only had to announce, that on the 22d of January last, a Bill on slave evidence, and one for abolishing Sunday markets, were in progress. The latter alone has since, it appears, passed into a law, but with provisions so extremely defective as to have produced to the slaves, as we have seen, (No. 81, p. 285,) evil instead of good.

5. *St. Vincent.*

The only advance in the reform of their Slave Code, made by the legislature of St. Vincent, is the removal of some of the restrictions which in their Act of 1825 had been placed on the evidence of slaves. That evidence is now to be admitted in all civil as well as criminal cases, excepting those in which their owners are concerned.

6. *Trinidad.*

The new Order in Council of February 2, 1830, came into operation in this Colony on the 23d of April, 1830. —

7. *Demerara.*

The new Order in Council of February 2, 1830, came into operation in this Colony on the 14th of May, 1830. Sir Benjamin D'Urban, the Governor, accompanied its promulgation by a further ordinance, in which he not only supplied certain omissions in the Order of February, but considerably modified some of its provisions. These modifications, which he appears to have adopted on the advice of planters, are for the most part highly objectionable; and some of them, we are happy to find, have been very properly disallowed by His Majesty.

One of these new provisions, which we are sorry to see has not been disallowed or even reprehended, is that which enacts that provisions and clothing are to be furnished to the slaves agreeably to an annexed schedule; being the very schedule we have inserted in our last number, p. 294. To permit this provision to stand as the law of Demerara, would be to give His Majesty's sanction to an actually starving allowance for the slave population of this Colony—an allowance, as we have already shewn, which is less than half of what is necessary for their due subsistence. How Sir B. D'Urban should have permitted himself to be so imposed upon by the misrepresentations of the planters as to adopt this parsimonious and utterly inadequate scale of allowance for the slaves, we know not: but we trust that the eyes of His Majesty's government will be open to the cruel consequences which must result from its confirmation. To confirm it would be to sign the death warrant of many of His Majesty's subjects, and would indicate a most opprobrious inattention to the comfort and well-being of the whole slave population throughout our Colonies, which we are very far indeed from imputing to the Colonial Secretary. The precedent would be most disastrous. Lord Goderich, we cannot doubt, will revise this part of the Governor's supplementary regulations. It can only be necessary that he should candidly investigate the matter in order to be convinced of the shameful imposition which has thus been attempted upon him, and of the duty of repelling, with the severest reprehension, this cruel and oppressive frustration of His Majesty's benevolent purposes. The food and clothing of the slaves are points of the most essential moment to their life, and health, and well-being; and we hesitate not to say, that if this schedule is henceforth to be permitted to regulate the amount of their allowances, it will be productive of an infinity of evil; and may more than counterbalance all the advantages which can be hoped for from the other provisions of this Order. Having in our very last number dwelt on this subject at some length, it cannot be necessary for us to enlarge upon it any further at present. We will only repeat that the allowance thus sanctioned by law, as we are ready to prove, is, for adult labourers, absolutely a starving allowance. It does not amount to half of what is requisite for the comfortable subsistence and the due clothing of the working slaves.*

* In No. 82, there appears an ambiguity in the extract respecting the allowance of food, &c., printed at the bottom of page 294, which, though it is correctly transcribed from the original, seems to require explanation. The passage is—"One and a half bunch of plantains, weighing not less than 45lbs., or of other farinaceous food; 9 pints," &c. Now it would almost seem from this that the

A provision is introduced by the Governor to prevent slaves from quitting the estates to which they belong, on Sundays, without leave from the owner or manager, to which the Secretary of State justly objects, unless it shall be qualified by a regulation which shall authorize them to resort to any licensed places of worship on that day.

A farther provision is introduced, empowering the owner to employ Sunday morning, until eight o'clock, in delivering to the slaves their weekly allowances. To this provision, the Secretary of State also objects, unless it can be proved to be unavoidable. But is it not perfectly obvious that no such proof can be exhibited? Why must two or three hours of Sunday be occupied with a distribution which could, with equal facility, be made on two or three hours of any other day? It is wholly impossible that *necessity* can, with any truth, be pleaded here. The only question that can arise is, shall two or three hours of the week be taken from the time of the master, or two or three hours of the Sunday from that of the slave, or rather from that of God, for this necessary but wholly secular employment?

Another clause in the Governor's supplementary enactment, retaining all those unnecessary and most unjust restrictions on slave evidence, which disgraced the former Order, is positively and peremptorily declared to be inadmissible. "The object of the new Order in Council," says Sir G. Murray, "is to abolish all distinctions respecting the admissibility of slave evidence which turn upon the servile or free condition of the witness. His Majesty *cannot* sanction any enactment which encroaches upon the simplicity of this rule. Respecting the evidence of slaves, it is at once needless and undesirable that any addition whatever should be made to the enactments contained in the Order in Council."

The Secretary of State further requires, that a record should be kept of all other punishments which may be substituted for flogging in the case of males, and for which record no express provision has been made by the Governor's ordinance.

He also disallows a clause, introduced by the Governor, for empowering the Fiscal, on the application of the owner, to inflict, at his discretion, on the slaves, a greater punishment than the owner himself is allowed to inflict. "It is impossible," says Sir G. Murray, with admirable judgment, "to recognize a class of offences at once too grave for the domestic forum, and too light for the judicial tribunal;—offences which are to be punished by the magistrate without being previously defined by the law. Such rules rather confound than establish solid distinctions between different degrees of criminality."

The Governor pleads strenuously for reserving to the planter the power of *compelling* his slaves to perform such work on the Sunday as potting sugar, picking coffee or cotton during crop, or turning and drying of coffee or cotton; and he has promulgated a regulation to that effect. Sir G. Murray, however, most justly disallows this provision, and requires that all such work on a Sunday should be matter of

"9 pints," &c. were additional, which is not the case. To convey the true meaning the passage ought to stand thus:—"One and a half bunch of plantains, or, in lieu of this, other farinaceous food, as 9 pints," &c.

choice and not of compulsion. "After giving every attention to your remarks on this subject, I cannot concur in your opinion that the slave should be deprived of his free agency upon the question of engaging systematically in any kind of agricultural labour on Sunday." The same principle most obviously, and still more forcibly, applies to the work of distributing to the slaves their allowances on a Sunday, to which we have just adverted.

Sir G. Murray, moreover, requires that successive punishments should not be inflicted on females without a due interval between them; and he objects to permitting the punishment of stocks during the night, or of confinement during the hours of noon with task work;—"because such punishments," he says, "diminish that degree of repose which is absolutely essential to enable a woman to undergo her daily labour in the field with a due regard to health."

The wisdom and considerate humanity of these observations are highly honourable to Sir G. Murray.—After correcting some minor deviations from the rules laid down in the Order in Council, and reducing the enormous fees required on the appraisement of slaves for manumission, from £30 sterling to 15 guilders, or about 25s. sterling; he concludes with requiring Sir B. D'Urban to revoke his proclamation, which His Majesty cannot allow; and to substitute for it a new proclamation in which the various corrections he has pointed out shall be introduced.

In our last number we succeeded in demonstrating the unfitness of the planters to make laws for the benefit of their bondsmen. The details into which we have now entered will serve to indicate a similar inaptitude, in such British Governors as either submit to the dictation, or rely on the advice, of the owners of slaves.

8. *Berbice.*

The course which has been pursued by the Governor of Berbice is so nearly the same with that pursued by Sir B. D'Urban in Demerara, with whom he was desired by the Secretary of State to take counsel, that it will not be necessary to enter into the details of it. The variations in the supplemental Orders, issued in the two Colonies, are so slight, as not to call for specification. The Governor of Berbice has, however, in these variations, somewhat improved on his model; and he has been so judicious as to exclude entirely, from his enactment, the miserable scale of allowances of food and clothing, which has been so opprobriously introduced into the law of the sister colony.

The comments of the Secretary of State on the supplemental Order of Demerara, and its disallowance by His Majesty, are of course equally applicable to the case of Berbice.

9. *St. Lucia.*

The acting governor of this colony, Col. Farquharson, on the 7th of April, 1830, acknowledges the arrival of the new Order in Council, which he follows up, on its promulgation, with two supplemental ordinances, containing some clauses which appear liable to serious objection. In what light they will be viewed by His Majesty's Government we are unable to say, as they are not accompanied by any remarks of the Secretary of State; but we cannot doubt that some of the clauses will

be disallowed, especially the regulation for compulsory labour on the Sunday, and the revival of some sanguinary provisions of the ancient Slave Code of the Colony. Among the *habitual* emergencies which the governor considers as justifying compulsory labour, on the Sunday, are specified, the grinding and boiling off of the canes and juice remaining from the preceding evening; (as if there could exist any *necessity* for cutting more canes on Saturday than could be ground and boiled on Saturday); the plucking, drying, or preserving of coffee; and also such manufacturing labour as is rendered necessary by the state of the season!—Females may be punished by owners and managers with handcuffs and solitary confinement; and by a magistrate they may be punished, *for a month*, either with the treadmill or other hard labour; or with labour *in chains on plantations and public works*; or with solitary confinement.—The penalties on fugitive slaves are cruelly severe. A slave striking his owner is liable to death; or striking any free person, to imprisonment and hard labour for life.—A variety of actions also, not criminal in free persons, are severely punishable as misdemeanors when done by slaves.—Any offence committed by an emancipated slave against his former owner is to be more severely punished than against a stranger.—British born slaves, manumitted in a foreign country, shall not be considered free in St. Lucia, unless the manumission is confirmed by the proper authorities. Are they then in such cases to be reduced again to slavery? There are other regulations which we will not stop to notice; but which seem out of place in a supplemental order, intended merely to give effect to the Order in Council; but some of those we have mentioned seem most outrageous.

10. *Bermuda.*

We have nothing announced from this Colony, except the renewal of its very imperfect Slave Act for one year more.

11. *Cape of Good Hope.*

The Order in Council of the 2nd of Feb. 1830, came into operation in this colony on the 26th of August, 1830. Its announcement was accompanied by various subsidiary regulations promulgated by the governor, Sir Lowry Cole. One of these regulations, which professes to secure Sunday to the slave, goes, in the opinion of Lord Goderich, virtually to abolish the day of rest altogether. The works which Sir Lowry Cole has classed as works of *necessity* on that day comprise “ploughing and sowing the land, and completing other agricultural operations,” “reaping and securing the crops,” “pruning vines,” “gathering and housing grapes,” “making (manufacturing) wine,” “going on journeys, carrying letters, &c.” By sanctioning such provisions as these the very object in the Order in Council would obviously be defeated. Lord Goderich, therefore, requires the governor to revoke the proclamation which authorises them. He requires him also to revoke the regulations for confining slaves on the whole or part of Sunday, and to define more exactly than he has done the minimum of food, clothing, &c. with which they are to be provided.

Sir Lowry Cole shews a singular reluctance to take from the planters the power of corporally punishing females, or of imprisoning them on Sundays, and, as formerly in the Mauritius so now at the Cape of Good

Hope, he argues the point against the Secretary of State with an earnestness which would be quite amusing were it not for the consideration, that men capable of thus feeling and reasoning should be chosen to superintend and carry into effect reforms of the kind intrusted to Colonial Governors. If Governors thus feel and reason what are we to expect from the planters? "Corporal punishment of females is objected to," says Sir L. Cole, "as tending to lower and impair the sense of respect"—and he goes on gravely to admonish his Majesty's Secretary that "there is nothing which lowers and degrades the female character so much as debauchery and dissipation"—and these, he is of opinion, would be repressed by corporal punishment and imprisonment on Sunday.—Does Sir Lowry Cole then believe (it would seem so!) that stripping women bare, and exposing their denuded persons to the common gaze, and then lacerating their flesh with a whip or a cat is the best way to heighten their modesty; or that shutting them up on Sundays in a dark room is the best way to improve their morals? Happily Lord Goderich takes a view of the matter very different from that of the Governor. He on the contrary, is of opinion, that Sir Lowry Cole's plans of discipline would at once perpetuate and increase the evil which he aims to cure. In reply also to Sir Lowry's argument, that deferring the punishment of a slave over Sunday till Monday would place the proprietor "in a most unchristianlike position on the day of worship and rest," Lord Goderich well observes that, "if the punishment be merited, I cannot discover why the purpose of inflicting it should be regarded as unchristian: and if unmerited, or if inflicted merely from motives of revenge, it is alike contrary to the principles of religion, on whatever day of the week it may take place."

12. *Mauritius.*

The Order in Council of the 2nd February, 1830, did not come into operation in the Mauritius until the close of September in that year. The supplementary order of the governor, Sir Charles Colville, which accompanied it, fixes Saturday as the market-day instead of Sunday; but the terms it employs are such as leave it in the master's option whether the slaves shall be exempted from plantation labour on Saturday, so as to have the power of attending the Saturday market. "Masters," the Order says, "*may*, and are hereby *recommended* to send such of their slaves as may have for sale, whether on their own or their master's account, articles of furniture, live stock, provisions, &c.; and in particular to grant this permission to those among their slaves, who, by their general conduct and attention to their work, have merited the indulgence and favourable consideration of their masters, for the bettering the condition of themselves and families. Slaves will not be admitted to the said market unless furnished with a pass ticket from their master or manager." A very large latitude is also allowed for the compulsory labour of slaves on Sunday. The works said to be of *necessity* and which may be *compelled* are such "works of agriculture, fabrication, or manufacture" as cannot be delayed or postponed without loss to the proprietor, a point of which he or his manager appears to be left the sole judge. The slaves, it is true, are to be paid for such labours, but it is a matter not of choice but of compulsion to perform them if re-

quired. Besides this, a power is reserved to the master of employing his slaves regularly and constantly, on the Sunday morning, till eight o'clock, without any remuneration.

We cannot but feel confident that these various regulations, with respect to Sunday labour and Sunday markets, will be annulled by His Majesty's Government, and a better system substituted. Sunday markets may be abolished as in the Mauritius, but of what benefit is their abolition to the slave if his attendance on the Saturday market, instead of being made a matter of legal right, is left wholly dependent on the caprice of his master. This is not giving him time in lieu of Sunday for marketing and labour. Besides, these regulations not only put it in the power of the master to work his slave in the field for six days in the week without any intermission; but to take from him also, absolutely and systematically, the three best hours of the Sunday without any remuneration; and further to *compel* him, for fixed wages, if the master shall so will, to employ the rest of Sunday in plantation labour. This state of things, we are persuaded, will not be permitted to continue.

The only letter of the Secretary of State, addressed to Sir Charles Colville, is dated the 28th of February, 1831, and is entirely confined to one point, namely the continued employment of chains, collars, and fetters as instruments of domestic punishment. The disgraceful ordinance of the Governor which sanctioned them is now disallowed; and Lord Goderich, in announcing this fact, adds, "I cannot conceal from you the regret with which I have perused it." Sir G. Murray, in a despatch of the 8th May, 1829, had conveyed in the strongest terms his dissatisfaction with any such use of chains, collars, &c. in the full persuasion that the local government of the Mauritius would have passed an ordinance for their entire prohibition, observing that he should only interpose in case that expectation should be disappointed. "After such an intimation," says Lord Goderich, "it was scarcely to be expected that a second ordinance should be transmitted, for his Majesty's approbation, which authorises the chaining together of women and boys of the age of fifteen, and the chaining boys apart from each other, whatever be their age." "No attempt is made to determine the form of these instruments except that the collar should not have *three* branches; but *two* branches are amply sufficient to inflict extreme distress on the wearer. No provision is made as to the length of time these instruments are to be borne, or the crimes for which they are to be put on."—In consequence of this persevering refusal of the local authorities, an Order in Council was passed on the 22nd of February last, absolutely prohibiting, under a penalty of from £20 to £100, and imprisonment from one to six months, the use of all such instruments of torture; which Order Sir Charles was directed to promulgate the moment he received it. Lord Goderich expresses great concern at the necessity of this fresh interference; but he adds, "the paramount considerations of justice and sound policy have silenced all minor objections." And he closes his despatch with impressing upon Sir Charles Colville, "the indispensable obligation of withholding, in future, his sanction from measures opposed to the principles of His Majesty's Government, as such sanction cannot fail to impose on His Majesty an office the most invidious and irksome. It were far better to encounter at once whatever obloquy or discontent you might incur by a frank opposition to such measures, than to sub-

ject yourself to the responsibility of adopting, and his Majesty to the painful duty of disallowing them."

From the Bahamas, Dominica, Grenada, Honduras, Montserrat, St. Kitts, Tobago, and Tortola, there is no report whatever of any kind on the subject of reform during the past year; and the reports from the other twelve Colonies, of which we have already given the substance, cannot be considered as very exhilarating. They not only indicate no real progress in the work of reform, but, in general, they exhibit, in characters of deepened malignity and horror, the innate, and, we firmly believe, incurable evils of Colonial slavery.

But the picture now presented to our readers, revolting and disgusting as it may be, is loveliness itself when compared with some of the details which we have yet to place before their view, in the analysis which we propose to give, in succeeding numbers, of the official Reports from the Protectors of slaves in the Crown Colonies of Great Britain. Here at least we have the advantage of seeing the evils of the system with less of the disguise which it has hitherto worn in all the slave Colonies, and which it still wears in the chartered Colonies. And it will be admitted that our growing acquaintance with its real, and unsophisticated features, does not tend to abate, but to aggravate its loathsomeness and deformity, its criminality and guilt.

And is such a state of things to be permitted to continue even for another year, in despite of the FIVE THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED PETITIONS, which, during the last session, conveyed to Parliament the reiterated, and unequivocal, and concurrent expression of the feelings and wishes of the British people on this subject? The foregoing sixteen pages contain, we believe, a too faithful analysis of all the improvements which are exhibited in the last annual Report of the Colonial Minister, zealous as he has shewn himself to effect improvement.—And what heart but must sicken in the contemplation of its details? With some slight exceptions, the progress of our cause, judging by the practical results now brought before us, seems rather to have retrograded than advanced. And is it not most afflicting, that, at the very moment we are thus called to mourn over our deferred, and almost bankrupt hopes, we should learn that fresh propositions have been made, and are entertained in Parliament, for extending farther eleemosinary relief to the determined upholders of this vicious system?—The earnest, the almost universal prayer of the British people to Parliament, has been that it would adopt effectual measures for extinguishing, throughout the King's dominions, the crime and the guilt of slavery, and thus effacing from the national character the foul and malignant stain which it inflicts. These petitioners will certainly, we apprehend, not be satisfied, if instead of proceeding to comply with this reasonable solicitation, Parliament should now call upon them to maintain, by farther premiums, and encouragements; and in fact, by farther contributions, to prolong and to aggravate those very evils which they deplore, and against which they have so long and so loudly protested;—those unchristian, unconstitutional, and murderous practices, which, from their inmost souls, they do utterly reprobate and abhor.

